Chapter XII

The Hottentots

[170] The seventeenth century Dutch gave the aborigines of the Cape of Good Hope region the name "Hottentots" because of their peculiarly clicking language. According to contemporary authors "Hottentot" was an insulting term for a stutterer. This nickname has stuck to the people. 101

As far back as their history extends, the Hottentots have never united in one nation. Even the oldest Dutch [171] settlers at the Cape report of tribal wars. In addition to this, beginning with the seventeenth century, the Hottentot tribes were pressed back by the white race from the south and in the nineteenth century by Bantu invasions from the north. As the Hottentots were thus compressed into an ever narrowing area, increasingly bitter battles for pasture grounds and water holes resulted and the processes which for ages have commingled the yellow-skinned nomadic tribes of South Africa were accelerated: migrations over an extensive area; the scattering of related elements; and the union of unrelated ones into a new tribal community under a new leader. We will not enumerate the tribes which succumbed during these struggles; the sources of their oldest history are obscure. The best accounts of the past century are missionary reports. (65) 175 619

65. Berichte der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft zu Barmen.

We can pass over the few remnants of the Hottentots that are left in the present Cape colony; they are vanishing, physically debased and spiritually estranged from their people in customs and language. They are the Korana and the Griqua and a few families scattered among the Boer farms that work as day-laborers. Only north of the Orange River a number of Hottentot tribes remained strong and relatively pure, linked with the tribes or hordes who had fled across the great river to escape pressures of civilization. Both, the aborigines and the refugees, were undisputed masters of Great Namaland up to the beginning of the eighties. Now fate has also caught up with them. The tribes, still important political factors before their last attempt at revolt, will be distinguished by name for only a short period. As history has taught, the differentiation of the tribes disappears with the captaincies (that greatest danger to peace which has now, we hope, finally been removed). Of the Hottentot tribes north of the Orange, with whom we first became more closely acquainted about the middle of 131 619

the nineteenth century, five had already been destroyed in native wars before our armed intervention in the disorders of Namaland. Their former territory (as of 1852) is indicated on the map by broken lines, for the borders of the remaining tribes (as of 1890) by unbroken lines (cf. map legend). At the moment it is not possible to foretell what the situation will be in regard to their numbers, their captains and their dwelling places, when the country is at peace again. At least the names of the tribes can be listed here: [172] a) Na‿ma·n is the name the Hottentot gives to those tribes who have lived for generations in present-day Great Namaland. They are: 131 68

1. The ǂAo·/nin or !Go·/men, who are sometimes called *!Na·ranin by their neighbors because of their gourd (naras) fields, the Topnaars of the Boers.

2. The !Kχa·ragai·kχoĩn, shortened to !Kχa·r(a)kχoĩn, the Franzmann Hottentots or also called the Simon Kopper people after their captain.

3. The //Ha·bobe·n or Veldskoendragers.

4. The !Ga·miǂnũ·/n or Bondelzwarts.

5. The //Kχau·/gõa·n or Zwartbooĩs now settled in the northern kookoveld outside of Namaland with a few scattered exceptions.

There are also others, who, although today they are scattered, still live in the memories of the natives as ancient tribal communities.

6. The //Kχau·ben or the Rooĩ Natie.

7. The /Kχa·ro‿õ·an or the Tsaibochen Hottentots of Keetmanshoop.

8. The //Ogain or Grootdooden.

b) *Gũ‿nũn is a designation for those Hottentot tribes, who emigrated from the present Cape Colony to Great Namaland at the turn of the nineteenth century. The following, usually called Orlam, belong here:

9. The !A·maĩn or Bethanie Hottentots.

10. The /Hai·/kχau·an or Berseba Hottentots.

11. The /Kχo·besin or Witbooĩs.

12. The Gai·/kχau·an or Amraal Hottentots of Gobabis.

In addition there is the tribe, extinct since 1889 which, under the leadership of Jonkers and Jan Afrikaner was the most feared of all the Orlam tribes.

13. //At·χa//a·en or the Afrikaaner.

These thirteen names will soon be all that is left of the old tribal divisions of the Hottentots. Before the destruction of the language, ideas and customs of this people, inevitable as its political destruction ensues, 1/4

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Bushmen FX10

superior to those of the other native peoples that they have been able to preserve much of their original cohesion and culture, and in many cases to offer a strong resistance to the disintegrating effects of contact with European civilization.

The present work deals with those two groups of natives who have suffered most at the hands of the European settlers: the Bushmen and the Hottentots. In spite of the far-reaching differences between them, they have in common several features, not only of race and language, but also of culture, especially religion, which justify their being treated together. These common features by no means render invalid the distinctions upon which is based the customary classification of these peoples into two separate groups. They are significant enough, however, to permit of both groups being regarded as constituting to some extent a larger ethnic unit, which, it is important to note, is clearly differentiated from the Bergdama on the one hand and the Bantu on the other. The term *Khoisan*, recently coined by Schultze to denote the racial stock to which the Bushmen and the Hottentots belong,[1] has therefore been accepted here as a convenient generic name for these two peoples. The necessity for such a generic name will perhaps be seen more clearly when the racial history of each people has been considered.

Topography: General Features

The Khoisan peoples at the present time live almost entirely in the western and central portions of South Africa. The main political areas within whose borders they are found are the Territory of South-West Africa, formerly a German colony, but now administered under mandate by the Union of South Africa; Bechuanaland Protectorate, administered directly by Great Britain through the High Commissioner for South Africa; and the central and western districts of the Union, principally in the Cape of Good Hope. The Bushmen formerly extended further east into Southern Rhodesia and over the rest of the Union, but have virtually disappeared from those parts.

The territory over which the two peoples are now scattered presents a solid land mass, covering an area of approximately 915,000 square

[1] L. Schultze, *Zur Kenntnis des Körpers der Hottentotten und Buschmänner*, 1928, p. 211. The term is compounded of the names *Khoi-Khoin*, by which the Hottentots call themselves, and *San*, applied by the Hottentots to the Bushmen. The latter have no collective name of their own.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Bushmen FX 10

the game. In the more arid parts the animals in the dry season concentrate in vast numbers about the rivers and waterholes and pans, to disperse widely as soon as the rains make life possible elsewhere. The same features of alternate concentration and dispersal can be observed in the life of the purely hunting tribes. The pastoral resources are on the whole excellent, there being no lack of grass or edible shrubs even during the dry season, and consequently cattle-keeping peoples are able to lead a favoured existence in these uplands. Agriculture is also practised to some extent, but is confined to the scattered alluvial tracts. As a means of subsistence it is rendered precarious by the frequent droughts which characterize the region. These often exercise a harmful effect on pastoralism as well, partly because of the ensuing lack of water, but mainly because the pasture is completely destroyed in many parts of the country. The plateaus of the Orange Free State, Cape Province, and Southern Bechuanaland are especially exposed to such catastrophes, but they are often enough marked in South-West Africa also, particularly in Great Namaqualand.

Further east and along the south coast the rainfall is high enough to place cultivation on a safe footing, while the country, where it is not covered with bush or forest, is composed of extensive grass flats which can be used as pasture land. Consequently, both agriculture and pastoralism are equally developed, the former being carried out on a far greater scale than in other parts of South Africa. Here, therefore, we find the most thickly settled zones, and the population is mainly sedentary, even although the pastoral tribes *must still to* some extent lead a nomadic life.

Migration Routes

The geographical situation of South Africa has an obvious bearing upon the racial history of the country. Cut off by vast uninterrupted stretches of water from ready access on the west, south, and east, its most direct link with other regions is overland to the north. In the north-west the great forest regions of the Congo impose an effective barrier upon extensive human migrations, so that it is principally from the north-east that invading peoples have been able to enter the country.[1] The East African highlands are connected with the south by a favourable route passing between the escarpments in the east with their sharp descent to the fertile but fever-stricken coastlands,

[1] Cf. Passarge, *Z. Ges. Erdk. Berlin*, 1905, pp. 32–3; *idem*, *Südafrika*, pp. 163–7.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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and the elevated ridges and plateaus of Central Africa. The route bifurcates north of Lake Nyasa. The eastern branch leads to the broad coastal belt of the Rovuma-Rufiji region and down to the Zambesi delta, the western branch to the diversified plateau between Lakes Nyasa and Bangweolo and the Zambesi River.

This diversified plateau region is important as the central point from which migration routes branch out into South Africa. Two principal routes may be distinguished, one leading to the south, the other to the west. The southward route, crossing the Zambesi just above or just below the famous gorge which begins at the Victoria Falls, leads through the Matabeleland plateau of Southern Rhodesia into the Northern Transvaal, avoiding the unhealthy coastlands of Portuguese East Africa on the east, and the waterless tracts of the Middle and Southern Kalahari on the west. Then, following the uplands of the great interior plateau, it leads down through the Western Transvaal and Orange Free State into the west of Cape Province, or, branching off through Zululand, passes along the south-east and south coast belt to rejoin the other line in the Cape Province. The westward route follows the southern equatorial watershed between the two well-watered regions of the Congo basin and the Northern Kalahari and so leads to the fertile and healthy highlands of Angola. Here it branches out on the north to Loanda and the Lower Congo, on the south over the Kunene into the highland plateaus of South-West Africa and across the Orange River into the Western Cape Province, where it meets the southward route.

These are the main lines of migration imposed above all on cattle-keeping peoples. The high steppes afford the best pasture and facilitate movement, and in addition are more healthy for men and animals than the low-lying coastlands or the moister portions of the interior with their malaria, tsetse fly and other infectious diseases. One other point must be noticed. South Africa by virtue of its geographical situation forms an ethnological cul-de-sac: the ocean on three sides bars all further progress. Hence invading peoples must either wipe out their predecessors completely or live side by side with them, the latter a condition likely to result in intermingling and the formation of hybrid races and cultures. Both processes have occurred frequently enough in the history of the country.

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2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930

FX13 Hottentot FX13

Nama

Bushmen FX18

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[facing p. 446 (a)]

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
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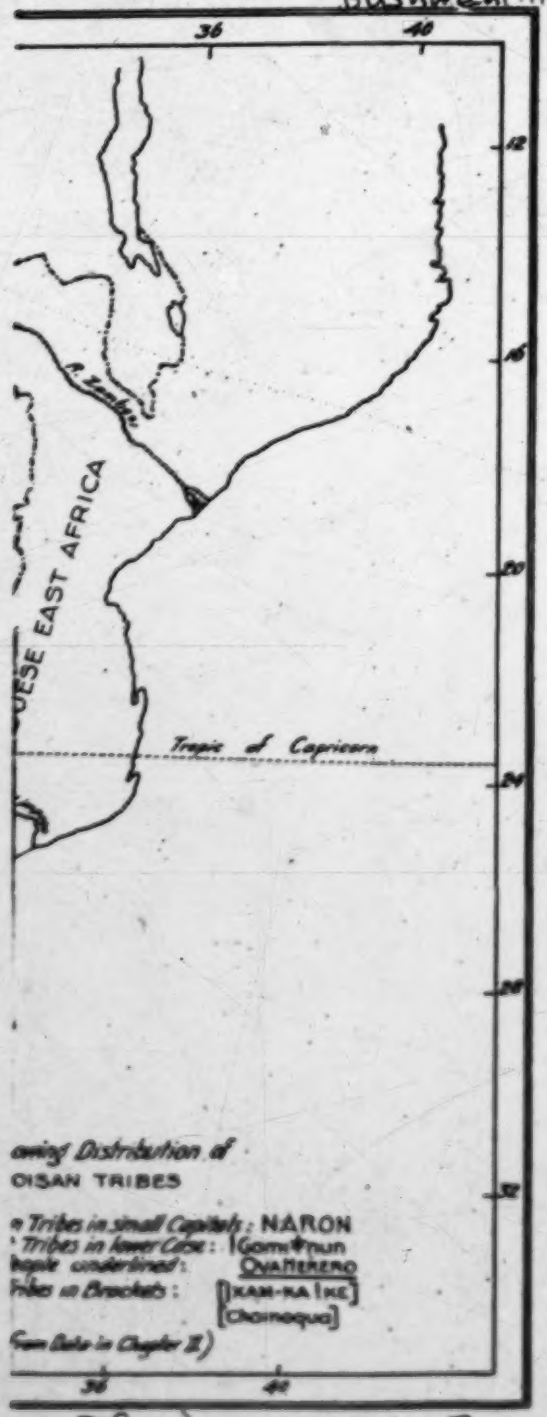

[facing p. 446 (c)]

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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[facing p. 446 (4)]

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

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THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE NAMA HOTTENTOTS OF SOUTHWEST AFRICA[1]

BY A. WINIFRED HOERNLÉ

101 THE people with whom this paper deals live in the territory known to-day as the Protectorate of Southwest Africa. They form one branch of the people known generally as the Hottentots, but from the very earliest days of the Dutch settlement at the Cape this branch of the Hottentot peoples has been called the Namaqua, and Nama is the name by which they call themselves to-day. The meaning of the word is unknown, but it is, according to tradition, the name of a remote ancestor of all the tribes calling themselves by the name. The old form, Namaqua, is probably derived from the dual form, *Nomakka*, *Nomaŏ* being the masculine singular, *Nomas* the feminine singular, and *Noman* the common plural.

101 To the early Dutch settlers two groups of the Nama were ●131 known, viz., the Little Namaqua, inhabiting what is known to-day as Little Namaqualand, and the Great Namaqua who inhabited what is to-day known as Great Namaqualand. Both of these groups of people at times visited the settlement at Table Bay,

104 [1] In transcribing the Hottentot words, I have used the system of E. Meinhof's *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Choi Khoin*, Berlin, 1909, as this is the system used by the Nama themselves nowadays in their writing. It is not strictly accurate always from a phonetic point of view, especially for the breathed pronunciation, but it is the conventional script of the Nama, and in this paper which is not concerned with phonetics it seemed best to follow it.

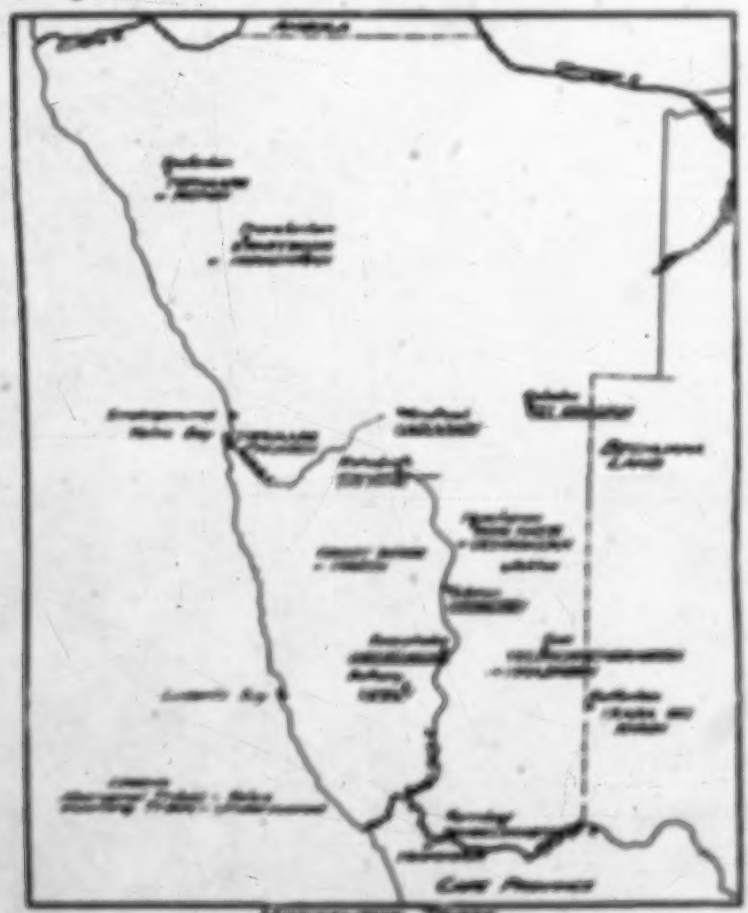
There are three tones in Nama each of which may give an entirely different meaning to an otherwise identical word. ' indicates a low tone, ' a medium tone, " a high tone. In order not to complicate the manuscript, I have indicated these tones only where it is essential in order to avoid confusion in the reading.

~ is the sign of nasalizing; ◦ indicates a long vowel; X indicates a harsh guttural *ch* something like the Dutch *ch*.

' / indicates the dental click, ᵖ the palatal, / the cerebral, // the lateral.

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

101 and their area of migration seems to have been a very wide one
131 in the early days. But the Great Namaqua were always the most northerly group of the Hottentot peoples, and early in historical times they settled definitely in the country to the north of the Orange river.



HOTTENTOT TRIBES IN THE SOUTHWEST AFRICAN PROTECTORATE

131 The whole area of the Southwest African Protectorate is approximately 322,450 square miles, and Great Namaqualand

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

occupies approximately two fifths of this area. In the past the northern limit of the Nama was indefinite until the pressure from the north by the Herero became serious, and certainly since the early part of the last century the Nama have been chiefly concentrated in the area of Great Namaqualand. This country is a high level plateau, or tableland, with an average altitude of 3,500 feet above sea level. Along the coast there is a strip of absolute sandy waste, of varying width but averaging about 35 miles across. The country rises rapidly from the coast inland, and the central tableland is cut off from the desert strip, or Namib, by a plateau range of sandstone formation running from north to south with an average height of 4,500 ft. The northern boundary is formed by the Awas mountains, a rugged mass of primary formation rising to a height of 7,200 feet above sea level and forming the watershed of the country. The rainfall over the whole area is extremely small, averaging from 4 inches in the south to 12 inches in the north. The country is, then, on the whole a barren plain with sparse vegetation and little permanent water. Yet after a season of sufficient rains it becomes a waving sea of grass, admirably suited both to cattle and sheep.

Such is the home of the nomadic pastoral Nama who originally owned great herds of large-boned, long-horned cattle and flocks of fat-tailed hairy sheep. Before the coming of the missionaries these people wandered about from fountain to fountain, seeking pasture for their stock. Large permanent fountains, or pools in river beds were claimed as their property by the different groups, rather than areas enclosed by definite territorial boundaries.

There are at present in the Protectorate, besides remnants of the various groups of the Great Namaqua with which this paper is mainly concerned, remnants of other groups who came in from the south of the river in the early part of the nineteenth century, when the general movement of the Hottentot peoples was away from the white settlements. These incoming groups spoke practically the same language as the Nama groups; indeed, the language throughout the area is very similar, so that one can hardly even speak of dialects, though undoubtedly there is a slight difference of vocabulary in the widely separated groups and, in some cases, a slightly different intonation.

8: Dapper Q-4 (no date) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
NAMA

NAMAQUAS.

The Hottentots named Namaquas[41]) live at the present time about eighty or ninety miles east-north-east of the Cape, but very far inland. In 1661 the commander of the Dutch fort, Heer Riebeeck, sent thirteen men there, with four pack oxen, to see if no gold or other valuable objects were to be found amongst them.[42]) They came across the Namaquas about eighty or ninety miles inland north-east of the Cape, and on going up to them were received with every sign of friendship and welcome, and presented with sheep. Their arrival was also greeted with an uncommonly curious musical performance. About one hundred musicians, each with a hollow reed of different length from the others, stood in a ring, in the centre of which a man beat time with a stick; and by blowing on these reeds produced as pleasant a harmony as if each reed were a trumpet of the marines. After the end of this performance, which lasted two or three hours and passed off with considerable gaiety, our men were at the king's request brought into his hut, and there entertained with milk and sheep's flesh. In return they presented the king with some copper, red beads, brandy and tobacco, which neither he nor his people had ever seen smoked, but they all learned this in a short time, even the women and children. Finally the king showed them a spot just outside his camp where they could rest and sleep.[43])

A few of the older people still know their own language, but the great majority now speak only Afrikaans, which is the regular medium of intercourse even amongst themselves. In South West Africa also the whole culture and power of the Naman has been hopelessly broken down, although for the most part they still retain their own language; and here too all of them have a good deal of mixed blood, brought into them first by their own relatives from the south, and then by mixture with the Germans and other whites (cf. Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples*, 48-9).

[42]) This was the expedition under Pieter Cruythoff, which left the Fort on Jan. 30, 1661, and returned on March 18. Its Journal, written by P. van Meerhoff, is appended to the Dagverhaal of van Riebeeck (entry of March 11, 1661, with additional remarks obtained orally from the travellers), and reprinted verbatim in Geddes-Molsbergen, *op. cit.*, I, 46-61.

[43]) Their reception by the Namaqua is fully described by Meerhoff in his journal of the expedition, upon which Dapper's informant has evidently drawn.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

Here I shall not attempt to relate a regular history, my intention being to confine myself within the limits of a journal. Did these people spring originally from Ham, the son of Noah, with the exception of some Arabs of the stock of Shem who entered Africa later on? Or did the native races in Africa increase and multiply, and living frugally in a place unknown to fame, and denied sustenance for their numerous population by an unproductive soil, frequently send out their youth in quest of new lands to settle, until, it may be, these emigrants, spreading far and wide unobserved, finally settled in the remotest shores of Africa? These questions are not so important for us to answer; let us content ourselves with learning their ways of life and their dealings with others. But as a preliminary to this we must inquire for a little while into the nature and situation of the land they occupy.

CHAP. I.

The Situation of the Cape of Good Hope.

The Promontory known as the Cape of Good Hope is situated at the southernmost point of Africa. Its longitude, in respect of the Straits of Gibraltar, is 39 degrees, 35 minutes; and its latitude, in respect of the Hesperian Promontory and Ouerdane (?) is 34 degrees and 30 minutes. It was discovered in the year 1486 by Vasco di Gama, sailing under the protection of John, King of Portugal.[*] Its mountains tower up to heaven, but are barren and very unfriendly to man. The tribes here are little blessed with crops, lying under the influence of niggard stars. The barren land stretches out vast and formless in pure sandy deserts, with herbage ore thrusting through the surface, unrelieved by the blessings of vegetation, but friendly rather to thorns and thistles and rough briars, whose by assiduous and prolonged cultivation it be made to yield pasturage, which even then is but scant. Apart from the sandy wastes it consists of huge stony mountains with here and there a plain. Worthy of note, then, is a certain wide level expanse with a circumference of about three miles, where a bloody battle once took place, and which is called in consequence

[*] The Cape of Good Hope was first "discovered" by Bartholomew Dias in 1487, and doubled again by Vasco da Gama in 1497, on his famous voyage to India, the first by the Cape sea-route.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. IX.

Their relations with other peoples.

Who the people are that neighbour the Hottentots is not yet known; those who venture a word about the negroes (popularly called Kafirs) depend more on hearsay than on the witness of their own eyes. Thus one of our officers would have it believed that he learned the facts I shall now mention from the most remote branch of the Hottentot family, to whose territory he had been sent with a guard of six men. These Hottentots differ widely from the rest in their ways, although they are not yet known by a special name; and they told him, says our officer, that between them and the negroes lies a broad river which they cross in boats made out of hollowed tree-trunks in order to exchange goods [1]). The Hottentots are separated from one another by no boundaries.

CHAP. X.

Physical Characteristics.

The human race as a whole, apart from local and national peculiarities, is provided at birth with a character proper to itself; but no less wonderful is it that every single individual of the species, down through the ages and among so many peoples, should be supplied by nature with his own personal lineaments, distinct from those of other men, expressive alike of the inner and the outer man, and constituting an indelendable difference between one individual and another. Thus the Hottentots as a race have everywhere a dark and swarthy skin, as if scorched by the sun, and are generally endowed with a dry, warm blood. Yet the faces of some show much fairer, departing from their native dusky hue. Nevertheless the blackest are the loveliest in their eyes, and they think themselves never so finely adorned as when they sprinkle divers coloured earths upon their hair, or rub them, mixed with fat, upon their faces. For in this region there is a mountain that produces colours, which if carefully worked might perhaps be profitable.

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[1]) I have been unable to identify this officer or the journey to which reference is made. It may possibly refer to Riewertsz Cruse, who with fifteen men landed at Mossel Bay in 1668 and went eastwards overland as far as the Gourits R., bringing back reports of the Attaquas, "a little similar to the Cape Hottentots, but well supplied with copper and beads, which they obtain from another nation dwelling further east and somewhat darker" (D., Nov. 28, 1668).

11: Maingard Q-5 (1931-1932) 1932
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Korana

to remain their home for a long number of years, and that the Taaibosches and the Links were then still living together.

The history of the migration of the Korana tribes, especially the Taaibosches and the Links, tallies entirely with the traditions still current at Bloemhof. *Tabak*, *Matiti* and *Trieb* all agree that they had come along the Orange River, there they had had a fight with the Barlaping. It was only when they reached Taungs that the Barolong attacked them but were driven to Setlagoli. Then they lived at Taungs with the Taaibosch, and separated from them at Mamusa. Scouts had been sent to reconnoitre the grazing and hunting possibilities of the banks of the Vaal. The Links then took their departure.

IV. HISTORY OF THE LINKS TRIBE

We have now reached the point, in the history of the northern Korana, when the Links have separated from the main body of the Taaibosch, and we shall now follow their fortunes in their future career as a separate tribal entity. When this separation actually happened, cannot now be accurately dated, for, from the meeting of Links by Campbell in July 1813,[1] when they seemed to be still in close contact with the Taaibosch, until 1820, when the existence of a large independent kraal of the Links on the Doukin River is disclosed by Hamuna to the same official of the London Missionary Society, nothing is known of their movements. But, at any rate, it is certain that this " hiving off " occurred in this intervening period.

Hamuna was a chief of the Links, who met Campbell on his second journey in August 1820, at Konnab on the Orange River, where the Korana was on a visit.[2] His tribe lived far away in the interior, at the junction of the Yellow and Doukin Rivers, that is, to give them their modern appellations, the Vaal and the Vet Rivers. The description given by Campbell of the " Doukin River which runs into the Yellow River, about four days' journey above its junction with the Malalareen (i.e., the Harts River) and flows from the east " renders identification definite, for the point where the Vet River flows into the Vaal is precisely 100 miles, that is four days' journey at an average of 25 miles a day, from the junction of the Vaal and Harts Rivers, and the general direction of the Doukin from east to west also corresponds to that of the Vet River.

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[1] Campbell, 1813, p. 130-2.
[2] Campbell, 1820, II. p. 284, and Appendix III in Vol. II, pp. 348-351.